

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

Ed,

Attached is information you may wish to have in your material for the briefing. In answer to a question you posed last night, there is no US carrier similar to the Kiev or Moskva class.

[redacted] plan to ride with you if that is agreeable.

[redacted]
Soviet Strategic Forces Division

Date 4 March 1976

FORM 101 USE PREVIOUS
5-75 EDITIONS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Approved For Release 2005/07/12 : CIA-RDP80M01389R000400040004-7

1. The Library of Congress study "United States/Soviet Military Balance," despite a number of shortcomings, is well structured, informative, and an ambitious undertaking. It treats all Soviet and US force elements that impact on the balance. It is particularly valuable because it deemphasizes static comparisons for their own sake and recognizes the asymmetrical objectives of the US and the Soviet Union. It is probably the best comprehensive study on the complex issue of the military balance that is available at the unclassified level.

2. The study is a valuable exposition, but it is not, as it pretends, an objective analysis or guide to determining force sufficiency -- "how much is enough". By relying on unclassified data, important qualitative differences are not adequately accounted for in the measurement of military effectiveness. By attempting to be so comprehensive within a limited exposition, superficiality results. For example, the importance of the US Triad -- ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers -- in the strategic balance is not adequately addressed. Likewise, for the general purpose forces the study glosses over some important quantitative and qualitative distinctions

Approved For Release 2005/07/12 : CIA-RDP80M01389R000400040004-7

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Approved For Release 2005/07/12 : CIA-RDP80M01389R000400040004-7

between US and Soviet forces, downplays the relative contribution of non-US and non-Soviet forces, displays a general lack of precision in definitions and uses of data, and thus does not accurately portray the NATO-Warsaw Pact balance.

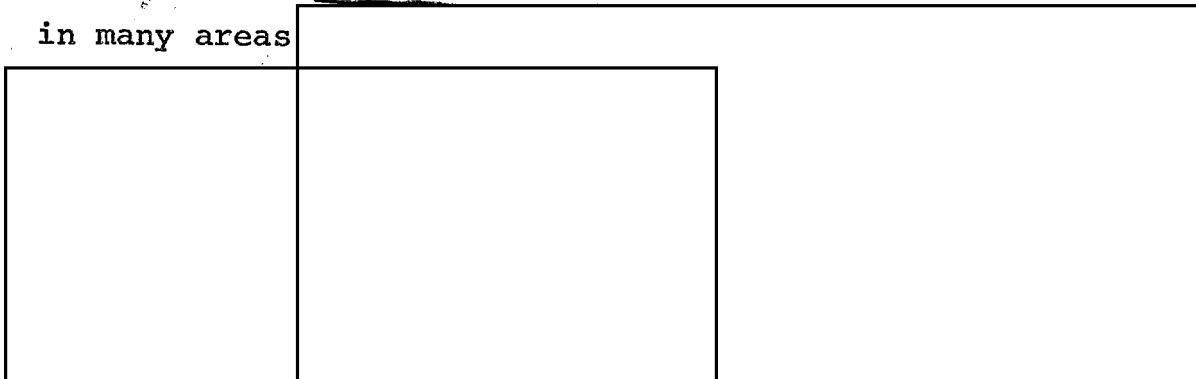
3. The following observations are not intended to detract from the usefulness of the study, but are intended to offset some of the misleading impressions about the balance that might occur from reading it.

Strategic Forces

-- US bombers are dismissed as not adding significantly to US capabilities. Soviet actions in the strategic defense area would suggest that their appreciation of the threat is much greater.

-- The importance of Soviet tactical cruise missiles in the strategic balance is overemphasized.

-- The importance of the US technological lead in many areas



25X1

25X1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2005/07/12 : CIA-RDP80M01389R000400040004-7

-- The capabilities of the Backfire are said to be vastly superior to the Bear/Bison force. This is only true for peripheral missions.

General Purpose Naval Forces

Qualitative differences between US and Soviet naval forces are virtually ignored. The discussion:

-- Implies that the Soviets have more major surface combatants in every category. In reality the US leads in all categories but small frigates and older heavy cruisers.

-- Improperly assesses amphibious capabilities by equating effectiveness to numbers of ships rather than to lift capability or to armament.

-- Implies that the Soviets intend to develop an ability to project power abroad using their new aircraft carriers and amphibious forces. Aircraft carriers appear to be dedicated to ASW and amphibious forces to local operations.

Ground and Tactical Air Forces

-- Although the study recognizes that a meaningful assessment of the military balance in Europe must not

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

only include US and Soviet forces but those of their allies as well, it tends to concentrate on NATO weaknesses and Warsaw Pact strengths. For example, the inclusion of French forces to the current NATO totals would result in NATO having more manpower than the Warsaw Pact. Further, it is not clear how non-US force mobilizations and reinforcement capabilities are treated, although it appears that their contribution is perhaps minimized.

-- In other areas of mobilization and reinforcement, the disparity between US and Soviet lift capabilities are not fully incorporated into the analysis.

25X1

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] logistic

problems the Soviets may encounter in mobilization and reinforcement of their forces in Europe are virtually ignored.

-- The impact of French withdrawal from NATO is discussed in what may be a misleading way. It is not clear that once hostilities begin just what the French response will be. It should not, however, unduly restrict the movement of NATO forces, as the study implies. It does point out the burden placed on other

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

alliance partners forced to accept peacetime deployments of air bases and logistics installations formerly stationed in France.

25X1

4. Despite the above mentioned shortcomings, the validity of the overall thrust of the paper remains. There has been a substantial shift in the US/Soviet balance since 1965. The study does a credible job of conveying this message and, perhaps more crucial, the important complexities inherent in it.

-5-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~